

## THE WASHINGTON HERALD

DRAMATIC DEPARTMENT.  
William Osborn, Editor

## THE WEEK'S PROGRAMME.

The Columbia—"The Man of the Hour."  
The National-Kyrie Bellew.  
The Belasco-Sothern and Marlowe.  
Chase-Albert Whelan.  
Academy—"The Heart of Alaska."  
The Gayety-"Parisian Widows."  
The Lyceum-"The Ducklings."

There is now hope that the low-water mark in theatricals has been reached; that the flat and foolish musical comedy, the unclean modern drama, and the risqué farce are losing vogue, and that we are to return to an era prosperous for art and for managers who are not slow to recognize the trend of public fancy.

"Herod" is a gladsome oasis in a dreary desert of triviality and unworthiness. The large audiences that gathered at the Belasco to enjoy this literary and dramatic treat furnished a sign that the love of art has not yet died in the public breast. That it has been slowly starving from lack of nutrition has been the opinion of the thoughtful for some time.

One of the causes of trouble has been the unseemly haste on the part of managers to put production after production before their patrons, in an unfinished condition, in order to outdo some one else, in an effort to pander to what they unjustly termed the popular demand for trash and nastiness.

It is not so very long ago that a production like "Herod," as grand as it is, would have excited no unusual comment, not because it would have been less appreciated, but because it would have been only one of many such excellent offerings.

Excepting the few Shakespearean plays which some high-aiming actors still continue to give, "Herod" stands absolutely alone to-day as a classical production, and gives promise of a revival of those days, not so very long ago, when we had such plays as "Cyrano de Bergerac," "L'Aiglon," "Gismonda," "Dante," "King Arthur," "The Sunken Bell," "Ulysses," "Cleopatra," and "Francesca di Rimini." The last of these productions of big classical plays was "Peer Gynt," and Faversham has not hesitated to match himself with Mansfield by his offering of "Herod."

He should, by the way, leave the comparison of himself with Mansfield to the critics and not offer the announcement through his own press department. He has proved himself big enough to stand alone in this field of endeavor, and those who follow closely the trend of the drama will owe him a debt of gratitude for his courageousness in going counter to the majority and becoming a pioneer in the enterprise of leading public taste back into the channels of artistic enjoyment.

No Moses ever led a more willing people out of the wilderness, and we hope that fate has in store for Faversham a sheaf of laurels of which "Herod" is already a shining leaf.

With the Sothern-Marlowe Shakespearean revivals and "Ben-Hur" in the near future, we cannot complain that there is just now a dearth of things really worth while. "Ben-Hur" has proved to be possessed of lasting qualities that mere scenic splendor could not supply. It is a moving and dramatic play as well as a great spectacle.

"Paid in Full," although it has enjoyed wonderful success, does not belong to the ultra-modern emotional school. It is one of those realistic domestic tragedies that appeal to every class of theatergoer and leaves in the mind something to think over long after the final curtain has shut out the actors from view. It is one of those timely sermons which are illustrated so vividly by the stage and which have a wholesome effect on the public morals. Situations such as these do not belong to any particular epoch; they speak in all tongues and for all time. No matter what the temporary taste may demand, there is always room for the little stories of real life such as "Paid in Full" so forcibly tells.

## "LA BOHEME" ON WEDNESDAY.

## Pacelli Opera to Be Sung at Lyric Theater, in Baltimore.

The haunting and exquisite strains of "La Boheme," one of the favorites of the works of G. Puccini, composer of "Madam Butterfly" and "La Tosca," will be heard at the Lyric Theater, in Baltimore, on Wednesday, January 5. The soloists will be the favorite tenor Bonci, with Frances Alda as the Mimi. The balance of the cast will be recruited from the best strength of the Metropolitan company, and the orchestra will be under the direction of Mr. Podesti, who has made such a favorable impression in the Italian operas sung so far this season. As this opera is a popular one, it is expected that a large number of Washington people will go over, taking advantage of the opportunities given them to make the trip and hear the opera on such a splendid scale as is possible in the capacious Lyric Theater.

## A "JIMMY" POWERS STORY.

The Walter Who Was Particular.  
"Dining at a Pittsburgh hotel the other night with my wife," said James T. Powers, of "Havana" fame, "I gave the waiter 50 cents. He shoved the coin back, saying: 'I never take money from actors, Mr. Powers.' I shoved it back at him and said:

"Oh, go on and take it."  
"No, Mr. Powers," says he firmly, "I never have accepted tips from actors and I never will. I know you actors have a hard time traveling around the country and tipping bell boys and porters, and trying to make a showing and keep up a front and all that. If it's just the same to you, I won't take it."

"Oh, very well, if that's the way you feel about it," I said, slipping the money into my pocket. A little while later along comes Mr. Walter with the finger bowls and a piece of paper and pencil.

"Mr. Powers," he says, "I couldn't take money from you, but I, too, have the artistic temperament. So has my wife. Besides, I'm connected with the profession through my brother. He works in a piano factory. So if you don't mind, Mr. Powers, I'd like a couple of seats to see your show."

"He wouldn't take 50 cents, but he would take \$3 worth of seats."

## SUCCESSFUL DRAMATIST.



HENRY D. CAREY,  
Author of "The Heart of Alaska," at the Academy.

## LOCAL STAGE NOTES.

Nellie V. Nichols is not related to Blanche Nichols, although both are in the same bill at Chase's next week. Nellie used to be a melodramatic comedy star.

William H. Murphy, of the Murphy-Nichols Company, at Chase's next week, is the writer of all the sketches in the company. He is becoming almost as prolific as Will M. Cressy.

Margie Hilton, the Ideal Girl, will this season be seen in a new and novel specialty assisted by her Eight Dancing Dresden Dolls. This act will be the feature of Weber and Rush's "Parisian Widows."

Frances Comstock, who will be seen here with Kyrie Bellew in "The Builder of Bridges," will be favorably remembered on account of her clever work in the late Clyde Fitch's play, "The Happy Marriage;" "Just Out of College," by George Ade; "Capt. Jinks," with Ethel Barrymore, and "L'Aiglon," with Miss Maude Adams.

Rev. George G. Hamilton, of Boston, has been taking "The Man of the Hour" as his text. After reciting the story of the play from his pulpit he added: "I can only speak of it with commendation. It is real and wholesome. It is a piece of human experience such as might be cut from the shining web of actual life in any American city, large or small."

Eleven years ago next week polka vau-deville saw the light in Washington, and there were few "to do it reverence." Pretty nearly everybody predicted a short and ignominious ending. Prophets and pessimists to the contrary, to-day it is a national institution, one of the sights of Washington, and it continues to grow with unparalleled popularity and prosperity. Chase's will observe the period with a special bill.

William A. Brady and Joseph R. Grismer are perhaps the most industrious play readers in America. They do not employ a professional reader, and possibly that is one reason why they "get across" with so many profitable and long-lived successes. From present indications, their "A Gentleman from Mississippi" will be a strong rival to "Way Down East" and "The Man of the Hour."

"The Man of the Hour" made a play-goer of Theodore Roosevelt, just as a more recent Brady-Grismer comedy, "A Gentleman from Mississippi," made him a dramatic critic. It was his daughter Ethel who commanded him to see Broadway's play, and since then he has been rather keen about theatrical first nights. Naturally, his preference is for drama that throbs with some big vital theme.

George W. Wilson, who plays the Bishop of Lanchester in "The Servant in the House," was the original Admiral Sir Joseph Porter, K. C. B., in the first American production of "Pinafore." Wilson was for sixteen years a member of the famous old Boston Museum, during which time he played more than six hundred different roles, and created over a hundred new characters. He is best remembered in Washington as the original king in "If I Were King," with E. H. Sothern, and as Col. Starbottle with Eleanor Robson in "Salome Jane." Many theatergoers will remember him as Uncle Nat Berry in "Shore Acres," and as Denman Thompson's successor for two seasons as the star of "The Old Homestead."

## THIS WEEK'S PLAYBILLS

## Columbia—"The Man of the Hour."

The Columbia Theater will offer as its attraction the week beginning to-morrow night, with usual matinees, the engagement of William A. Brady and Joseph R. Grismer's successful American play, "The Man of the Hour," by George Broadhurst. "The Man of the Hour" occupies a field entirely its own, and its popularity is due to real merit, as the playwright has refrained from resorting to any of the so-called sensationalism upon which so frequently authors depend for temporary notoriety. "The Man of the Hour" tells a story that is as instructive and entertaining as it is fascinating. Because it depicts life as it exists in American cities, the plot is readily understood and enjoyed, while the delightful love story interwoven adds interest, and the clean-cut comedy and brilliant satire combine to build up a play that is worth seeing. The usual carefully selected cast of notable players common to the William A. Brady and Joseph R. Grismer attractions will be seen this season.

## Belasco-Sothern and Marlowe.

The association of E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe for seven performances of the Shakespearean plays at the Belasco Theater, commencing to-morrow night, gives to the present theatrical season one of its most dignified and impressive events. That the engagement has also great popular appeal is shown in the large demand for seats, which, it is declared, is the largest of the season, and which is an encouraging evidence to students of the theater who hope for the support of the best in the drama.

The talents of Mr. Sothern and Miss Marlowe are too well proven to require even passing comment. Through long lines of sincere effort in their art they have advanced to their present eminence and foremost position in public esteem. That they have elected to center their rich talents and experience upon the great classics of the drama deserves for them the utmost commendation of theatergoers.

Mr. Sothern and Miss Marlowe have selected the following repertoire for their coming appearances: Monday and Tuesday nights, "Romeo and Juliet;" Wednesday and Thursday nights, "The Taming of the Shrew;" Friday night, "Hamlet," and Saturday matinee and night, "The Merchant of Venice." This programme gives the two artists ideal opportunity to appear under the most favorable circumstances in a varied array of congenial characters, and to prove their varied mastery of stage expression.

The support contains many names known long and with honor to theatergoers, and who have appeared in the Sothern-Marlowe productions for some seasons. Also enrolled into their present organization are new members from former Irving and Terry companies and Beerbohm Tree's London organizations. Frederick Lewis, Sydney Mather, Rowland Buckstone, William Harris, Malcolm Bradley, Albert Hovson, Eric Blind, John Taylor, Frederick Roland, Alma Kruger, Elizabeth Ballantyne, Mrs. Woodward, Norah Lamson, and others are in the cast.

The only matinee given will be "The Merchant of Venice," on Saturday. Owing to the length of the performance, the curtain at night will rise at 8 o'clock sharp.

## New National-Kyrie Bellew.

Beginning to-morrow night at the New National Theater, for one week, Charles Frohman will present Kyrie Bellew and a superb company direct from the Hudson Theater, New York, in one of the most important dramatic productions of the season, "The Builder of Bridges," a new four-act play by Alfred Sutro, who will be favorably remembered here as the author of "The Walls of Jericho," "John Glade's Honor," and other ambitious achievements that have won him world-wide recognition as one of the greatest playwrights of modern times. "The Builder of Bridges," although a society drama of present-day life, is absolutely original in plot, highly dramatic in action, and replete with startling situations. The crisis of the play is a climax that will prove as surprising in effect as it is unique in conception and artistic in execution. The play tells an intensely interesting story of a sister's self-sacrificing love for a wayward brother, whose youth and inexperience have involved him in a veritable maelstrom of financial difficulties and impending disaster.

In "The Builder of Bridges" Charles Frohman has provided Kyrie Bellew with a most worthy vehicle for the actor's first starring tour under his management. The original company is one of especial excellence, and will be seen

intact when it appears here with the entire New York production absolutely complete, precisely as presented during the long season at the Hudson Theater, New York City. Prominent in the cast are such well-known artists as Miss Gladys Hanson, who won well-deserved acclaim while leading woman with E. H. Sothern last season, when she played all the joint-star roles previously delineated by Julia Marlowe. Other prominent players are Mrs. Thomas Whiffen, Frances Comstock, Jane May, Mr. De Witt C. Jennings, Frank Connor, Eugene O'Brien, and Ernest Stallard.

Chase's next week will celebrate its eleventh anniversary with a festival bill of proportions exceeding all past commemorative programmes, and offering as its leading foreign attraction Albert Whelan, the great Australian "impressionist" comedian, who has scored an unprecedented hit in London, New York, Boston, &c. The supplementary leading feature will be William H. Murphy, Blanche Nichols, and company, in "The School of Acting," one of the funniest farces imaginable, dealing with the amateur actress and the barnstorming type of roving theatrical companies. It is rated as more laughable than "From Zaza to Uncle Tom," their earlier success. The third special feature will be the songstress-comedienne, Nellie V. Nichols, in her delightfully characteristic offering. A novelty will be presented by the Three Ernests, the great German specialists. The Melotte Twins and Clay Smith will offer their melange, and Erna and Jenny Gasch, two talented foreigners, will receive strong applause for their fine physical work. The Lee Brothers and Miss Allen, and the motion pictures of "Buffalo Races" will conclude the brilliant anniversary bill. The advance sale of reserved seats opens to-morrow, and the prices will not be advanced.

Academy—"The Heart of Alaska." Originally produced at the Majestic Theater, New York, "The Heart of Alaska" comes to the New Academy this week.

The play met with a considerable degree of success during the New York engagement, and several critics were loud in their praise of the really magnificent and detailed production. The play, as the title suggests, is one dealing with life as it is found in a small mining town up in the north of Alaska.

During the action of the play a humorous vein of comedy is found, while remarkable scenic pictures showing the country in general are seen to a fine degree of accuracy. The cast is composed of such well known players as Louis Thiel, Hector Dfor, Ford Fenimore, Lucy Milliken, Fern Foster, Edwin Caldwell, Fred Seaton, Joseph Harris, and the author, Henry D. Carey.

A special feature is the two malamutes and the genuine timber wolf, which adds much to the atmosphere of the play. The production was staged by T. Hayes Hunter, long identified with David Belasco, and now stage director for Lillian Russell.

The Lyceum—"The Ducklings." One of the most complete productions ever given in burlesque at popular prices will be found this week at the New Lyceum, when that splendid big organization, "The Ducklings," will appear in two brilliant and timely burlesques, "The Janitor" and "A One Night Opera," incidentally introducing an olio of eight star headliners in vaudeville, including Charles H. Boyle and Lillian George, Frank Damsel and Frances Far, Bulla and Raymond, Nugent and Nugent, The Hall Sisters, William Cullen, Della Fayette in illustrated songs, and the handsome chorus of singing and dancing girls, ever seen with a show of this class. The closing burlesque, "A One Night Opera," is a musical comedy full of timely hits on passing events and satires on men and women of the hour.

The Gayety—"Parisian Widows." This week the Gayety Theater will have Weber and Rush's "Parisian Widows" company, one of the regulars, and always one of the best, but this season bigger and better than ever. That screamingly funny first part, "The Actors

## SCENE FROM "ROMEO AND JULIET" AT THE BELASCO.



E. H. SOTHERN AND JULIA MARLOWE.

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Boarding House," at which those of our playgoers who saw the "Parisian Widows" last season are still laughing, will again open the show in response to popular demand. The closing comedy is entitled "Fun in a Department Store." With the Widows will appear Ben Pierce, who plays the leading comedy part in both farces, and has a new specialty for the olio, and Margie Hilton, the Little "Southern Rose," who will be seen in congenial roles, and also in a novel act termed "The Mysterious Mechanical Dresden Dancing Dolls."

A chorus of lively and pretty girls will be much in evidence in ensembles and groupings.

## COMING ATTRACTIONS.

## New National—"Ben-Hur."

For entertainment, deep interest, keen excitement, and exaltation of spirit, "Ben-Hur" is the pre-eminent attraction of the American stage to-day. The Wallace romance is the strongest of the plays based on Biblical themes, and its extended runs in all the large cities during its eleven successful seasons are most potent proof of its popularity. Its seventeen scenes are as real as stage art can make them and present pictures of long reaches of starlit desert; a panoramic view of Jerusalem and its environs; the interior of a Roman galley during a sea fight with Aegean pirates; a feast day in the Grove of Daphne; the great circus of Antioch during the chariot race, and an awe-inspiring picture of the slopes of the Mount of Olives on the first Palm Sunday, the day of the Nazarene's entrance into the Holy City. Edgar Stillman Kelley has written some fine illustrative accompanying music, the theme being very effectively developed, and in the exultant and highly impassioned moments of the drama the emotions expressed are greatly accentuated by this symphonic accompaniment.

The thrilling and splendidly staged chariot race will show the contesting drivers, each urging four horses, running at full speed, while the marvelous miracle scene on the Mount of Olives will have no less than 300 men, women, and children in this the most impressive of all stage pageants.

The curtain will rise promptly at 8 o'clock on the evening performance of "Ben-Hur" and at 2 o'clock on the matinees. The management wish it understood that no one will be seated during the prelude, which shows the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem to the wise men, and which is one of the most beautiful portions of the performance.

Columbia-Chancey Olcott. "Ragged Robin," the delightful Irish play with which Chancey Olcott will return to the Columbia Theater next week, is one of the most successful pieces in which the popular comedian has been recently seen. It is of particular interest from the fact that it is the first Irish play in which the Irish fairies have been an important element to be produced in nearly half a century. The interweaving of fairy and mortal in the story closely follows the style of the present writers of the National Irish Theater in Dublin and "Ragged Robin" has the distinction of being the first play to be constructed along those lines on this side of the

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## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS.

## New National-Vessella's Band.

The famous musical organization which has played for seven seasons at the Steel Pier in Atlantic City, Vessella's noted band, will give two concerts at the New National Theater to-day, the first at 3 o'clock this afternoon and the second at 8:30 o'clock this evening. The band is composed of fifty instrumentalists, and Signor Vessella is said to have drilled them, under his skilled leadership, to such a pitch of excellence that their performances are artistic feasts for music lovers. For the Washington concerts three soloists have been especially engaged, Signora Sedelmayer, the eminent operatic soprano; Signor Montella, whose baritone voice has won him high encomiums, and Signor Rinaldi, the cornet virtuoso.

The afternoon programme is as follows: March—"America".....Vessella  
Overture—"Gipsy Lady".....Rinaldi  
Cornet solo—"For All Eternity".....Mandelstam  
Signor Rinaldi.  
Selection from "Tales of the Moon".....Verdi  
Barytone solo—"Dinah".....Meyerbeer  
Signor Montella.  
Selections from "La Traviata".....Puccini  
Soprano solo from "La Traviata".....Signora Sedelmayer.

"American Fantasy".....Herbert  
The evening programme will be devoted entirely to the compositions of Richard Wagner, the numbers being the following: Overture from "Tannhauser."  
Barytone solo—"Evening Star" from "Tannhauser," Signor Montella.  
"Albion Land."  
Cornet solo from "Die Meistersinger".....Signor Rinaldi.  
"The Ride of the Valkyrie."  
Soprano solo-Aria from "Lohengrin".....Signora Sedelmayer.  
Selection from "Lohengrin".....Signor Montella.  
Duet-By Signora Sedelmayer and Signor Montella.  
March-From "Tannhauser."

Belasco-Hammer Orchestra.  
For those who are unable to attend afternoon concerts an opportunity will be afforded them on Sunday night, January 2, at the Belasco Theater, to witness the splendid work of the newly organized Heinrich Hammer Symphony Orchestra, which received so much favorable criticism at its two recent concerts.

That all lovers of good music may avail themselves of the opportunity to hear this new organization, the scale of prices has been greatly reduced.

The programme:  
Overture—"Mignon".....Thomas  
Selection—"Thais".....Mandelstam  
Violon solo-Mr. Grizard.  
First solo—"L'Arlésienne".....Bluet  
Overture—"Phedra".....Mandelstam